

Perfect 45-Minute BBQ Chicken Breasts: The Ultimate Weeknight Main

A single foil-lined baking sheet is all you need, making the post-dinner cleanup a breeze.



OVEN
350°F

TIME
25 min

TEMP
160°F

PRINT
Recipe Card

INGREDIENTS

The Protein: 4 boneless skinless chicken breasts (about 2 pounds).

The Fat: 3 tablespoons olive oil.

The Dry Rub: 2 tsp kosher salt, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp paprika (sweet or smoked), $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp garlic powder, $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp onion powder, and $\frac{1}{2}$ tsp black pepper.

The Star: 1 cup of your favorite barbecue sauce (divided into two $\frac{1}{2}$ cup portions).

DIRECTIONS

- 1. Prep the Oven:** Set your oven rack to the middle position and preheat to 425°F (218°C). This high heat is essential for getting the sauce to bubble and thicken. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil and grease it lightly with oil to prevent any "sauce-stick" disasters.
- 2. Flatten for Success:** Thoroughly dry each chicken breast with paper towels. Place one breast at a time inside a large plastic bag or between sheets of plastic wrap. Use a meat tenderizer to pound it to an even $\frac{3}{4}$ thickness. This ensures every bite cooks at the exact same rate.
- 3. Season the Surface:** In a large bowl, whisk together the olive oil, salt, paprika, garlic powder, onion powder, and black pepper. Add the chicken breasts and toss them until they are completely coated in the oil and spices.
- 4. The First Sauce Layer:** Pour $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of your BBQ sauce into the bowl with the chicken. Turn the pieces until they are fully submerged in the sauce. Transfer the chicken to your prepared baking sheet, leaving space between each piece.
- 5. Bake and Baste:** Bake for 25 minutes. At this point, remove the pan and brush the remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of BBQ sauce over the tops of the chicken. This second layer creates that iconic sticky, glossy finish.
- 6. Finish and Rest:** Return the pan to the oven and continue baking until the internal temperature reaches 160 to 165°F (usually another 10-15 minutes depending on your oven). Once finished, let the chicken rest for 5 minutes. This is the most important step for a juicy breast!

SWAPS & NOTES

Sweet Paprika: If you want that "off-the-grill" taste, use smoked paprika.

If you prefer a milder, classic flavor, go with sweet.

The BBQ Sauce: Since the sauce is the primary flavor profile, choose one you love.

A honey-based sauce will caramelize faster, while a vinegar-based sauce will provide a tangier bite.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

Dry Your Chicken: If the chicken is wet when you add the oil and spices, the seasoning will slide right off.

Use paper towels to get them bone-dry before prepping.

Foil is Your Friend: BBQ sauce contains sugar, which will burn and stick to your pan.

Using foil makes cleanup as simple as throwing away a sheet of silver paper.

More recipes: [ChefManiac.com](https://chefmaniac.com)

Original recipe: <https://chefmaniac.com/perfect-45-minute-bbq-chicken-breasts-the-ultimate-weeknight-main/>